

nine kids when they tried to go to Little Rock Central High School 42 years ago.

One of the great human weaknesses is that when people get organized, they think that, in order for their tribe to matter, the other tribe has to matter less. In order for their lifestyle to be validated, somebody else's has to be invalidated, that every difference of opinion turns out to be a difference justifying the dehumanization of your opponent. This is a very dangerous thing, made more dangerous, not less, by the collision of societies and the close contact and the openness of borders.

So we need you for another reason. We need you in the Democratic Party. We need you as Americans. We need you to remind us of what the concept of family means to you. What are the obligations of people who are in your family? What do we owe to one another? If you're like me, once you get about 50, your family members, there are some you don't even like very much. But you are bound together. You are bound together.

I want you to think about that, so when you go out across the country, you go back home and people say, "Why are you here? What are you doing? Why are you a Democrat? Why are you helping who you're helping in 2000?" Say, "Well, number one, I tried him in '92 and it worked. We're in a lot better shape than we were then, and we're in a lot better shape than we've been in a long time. Number two, I'm doing it because I want to take on the big challenges of the future. And I'm really determined that we're not going to blow this responsibility to our children and grandchildren. And number three, because the Democrats represent the best hope for creating a family in America and a family in the world that doesn't minimize our differences; it celebrates them. It doesn't minimize our arguments; it respects them. But it recognizes that underneath it all is our common humanity. And without that, nothing else matters much. With it, there's nothing we can't do."

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 p.m. in the Crystal Ballroom at the St. Regis Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Miguel Lausell, chair, Hispanic Leadership Council; Representative Loretta Sanchez, general cochair, Democratic National

Committee; and President Eisenhower's daughter-in-law Joanne and her daughter, Susan.

Remarks on Departure for York, Pennsylvania, and an Exchange With Reporters

November 10, 1999

Y2K Readiness

The President. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I want to thank John Koskinen and all the leadership that he and others have provided in helping to prepare America for Y2K.

We are releasing our fourth and final quarterly report on public and private efforts to address the Y2K computer problem. The report shows that our hard work in this country is paying off, and while there is more to do, I expect we will experience no major national breakdowns as a result of the year 2000 date change.

First, the report makes clear that the Federal Government is Y2K ready and leading by example. Thanks to the efforts of the Office of Management and Budget, we have completed work on more than 99 percent of all mission-critical computer systems, which means the American people can have full faith that everything from air traffic control systems to Social Security payment systems will continue to work exactly as they should.

Second, the report documents remarkable Y2K progress in all of America's critical infrastructure areas. When it comes to financial services, power, telecommunications, air and rail travel, leading organizations report they have completed or nearly completed all their Y2K work. I am confident the Y2K problem, therefore, will not put the savings or the safety of the American people at risk.

But in some areas we do continue to have concerns. Some small businesses, local governments and other organizations have been slower to address the Y2K challenge. So again I say to these groups, don't just sit back and wait for problems to occur. Call 1-888-USA-4Y2K, and we'll show you where to get help.

And while most of our large trading partners are in good shape, we still have concerns

about the Y2K preparations of some developing nations. The State Department will continue to update its country-by-country assessments and advisories as new information becomes available.

We have less than 2 months now until the year 2000. Even those groups that have already completed their Y2K work must now put great emphasis on creating and testing contingency plans, as the Federal Government has already done. Back in October, when the Government made the transition to fiscal year 2000, we did encounter some small date-related computer problems. But the overriding lesson of that experience was that alert organizations, armed with good contingency plans, can fix Y2K disruptions in short order.

Thanks to the hard work of John Koskinen and his staff and proactive leaders all across our Nation, America is well on its way to being Y2K ready.

Now, over the next 52 days, we must continue to reach out to smaller organizations and local governments whose preparations are lagging behind. If we work together and use this time well, we can ensure that this Y2K computer problem will be remembered as the last headache of the 20th century, not the first crisis of the 21st.

Budget Negotiations

Q. Mr. President, as the budget negotiations drag on, Members of Congress have indicated, of course, they want to get out of town tonight. You don't want to leave town until Sunday. I'm wondering if that is your personal deadline, and doesn't that give you a slight advantage over them?

The President. Well, I don't really have a personal deadline. I did have good talks, as recently as this morning, with Senator Lott and Speaker Hastert. And I've been in constant contact. I saw the Democratic leaders yesterday, and we visited briefly. I think we're making good progress. We made some real progress in putting 50,000 more police on our streets. We're making some progress in other areas. We still have to resolve our Nation's commitment to 100,000 teachers. We're still working on the United Nations arrears and a number of other environmental

issues. But I think we're making good progress, and I'm hopeful.

And we should know—let me say, I know you have a lot of questions. But actually, you ought to know more by 12 or 1 o'clock today about how well we're doing. I think we'll know certainly by the middle of the afternoon if we're in any shape to finish more or less when the Congress would like to.

And let me also say, I'm still very hopeful that we can pass the Africa trade bill and the Caribbean Basin initiative. I'm still very hopeful we can pass this very important legislation to let people with disabilities to go into the work force and carry their Medicaid. That could be one of the most important social pieces of legislation we've passed in a long time.

So we've got a lot to do. But I think we can—if we just keep working, we'll get there.

Timing of President's Visit to Greece

Q. Sir, could you tell us about the Greek postponement, what precipitated it, your level of concern for security there?

The President. Oh, I'm not concerned at all. You know, if the Greek Government and the Secret Service aren't concerned, I'm not concerned.

I explained yesterday, the Greeks have a tradition of large demonstrations, and the communists, the anarchists, perhaps some others in Greece want to demonstrate, in large measure I understand, because they strongly disagreed with my policy in Kosovo and, presumably before that, in Bosnia. And you know, I think we were right, and I disagree with them. But the fact that they have the right to free speech doesn't concern me.

The Greek Government asked us to put the trip when we did, I think, largely for other reasons. I think they thought it would be better for them and that meetings we have might be more relevant if we did it after, rather than before, the OSCE meeting in Turkey. And so they asked to do it. Whether the demonstrations had anything to do with it, I don't know. But they might have. But I'm not bothered about it. You know, it's going to happen. And you all get to take pictures of it.

World Trade Organization Talks in China

Q. Mr. President, can you give us a read-out on the WTO talks in China? Any progress there?

The President. No. I can't. All I know is that they are going on, and we're doing our best.

I've got to run to Pennsylvania.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:05 a.m. on the South Grounds at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to John A. Koskinen, Chairman, President's Council on Year 2000 Conversion.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion With Harley-Davidson Employees in York, Pennsylvania

November 10, 1999

The President. Let me just say first, I have had a great tour. I'm glad to be here. Thanks for the jacket. But thanks, most of all, for your wonderful job you do. And I'd like to just have some opening remarks from Jeff and Harry, and then maybe we'll do a little roundtable discussion.

As you know, as I said, I'm interested in two things today. One is, how has Harley done it; what are the major elements in your success at home and around the world? And secondly, how important is the global market to the profitability and long-term success of your company?

[At this point, the roundtable discussion continued.]

The President. Several years ago, you were subject to unfair competition in the American market, and it took some action to get that straightened out. But one of the reasons that I wanted to have this new trade meeting that we're going to have next month in Seattle—we're going to try to launch a new round of trade negotiations, and the main purpose, from our point of view, is lowering tariffs to American products, because there's a lot more, not just yours but a lot of other products where, even though we have a very successful economy and relatively high wages compared to most other countries, we are

quite competitive in a whole range of areas if we can get these tariffs down. I think it's very important.

[The roundtable discussion continued.]

The President. You know, it's very interesting, I have tried to get the White House and the Government to operate more like you just described, and one of the real problems of doing it in politics is that if you make a mistake, it's big news. And if you don't, it's kind of like the dog that doesn't bark. I mean, it's not like—if you don't make a mistake, you sell a lot of motorcycles; the bottom line goes up. Sometimes if we don't make a mistake, you get your Social Security check.

And it's become—one of the things that Vice President Gore really tried to do with our reinventing Government initiative is to get decisions made more quickly by people that are closer to the decision point. And we tried to run the White House as a team and have people not be scared of their shadow when they come to work, to go ahead and make a decision and do things at work.

But it's very interesting to see what the problem in Government is, which is that—and I'm not blaming anybody and certainly not our friends in the press who are here covering this event—but it is—the pressures are great not to mess up, so that tends to set up systems that are too top-down, too rule-oriented. And we really tried to change that. And we've had pretty good success, I think.

But you've got to be willing—if you trust people to make decisions, you've got to be willing to make a mistake, because managers make mistakes, so workers are going to make mistakes. Everybody makes mistakes. I'd be curious to know how you handle that, how you deal with the inevitable occasional error.

[The roundtable discussion continued.]

The President. One of the things that will inevitably happen, and we deal with this in every trade negotiation, is you have more and more trade; you have to move toward greater uniformity; you have to respect other countries, their determination about what's safe and what's good. Sometimes a lot of these